

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An expansible tunneling apparatus and associated methods for creating an anatomic working space for a surgical procedure. Various embodiments of one and two piece apparatus that permit laparoscopic observation both during tunneling and during subsequent balloon
5 dissection are disclosed. In a disclosed one piece embodiment, a tubular member has a bore extending therethrough and an open distal end. A lip is formed in the distal end of the tubular member to capture the distal tip of a laparoscope that is inserted into the tubular member to permit observation of the procedure both during tunneling to a desired location and during subsequent balloon inflation. An elongated neck of the balloon is secured to the tunneling
10 member. The elongated neck permits the tubular member to be withdrawn slightly from the balloon after inflation to facilitate observation. After the balloon has been advanced to the desired location in the body it is inflated through a balloon inflation lumen to cause the balloon to dissect tissue and create an operating space. Various balloon constructions and a reusable design are also disclosed.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY